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Information

Professional Services Committee

Update on the Implementation of the Commission's Accreditation System

Executive Summary: This item presents an update on the activities that the Committee on Accreditation and the staff have been engaged in to implement the Commission's revised accreditation system.

Recommended Action: For information only

Presenter: Teri Clark, Administrator, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

♦ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs

April 2009

Update on the Implementation of the Commission's Accreditation System

Introduction
This item describes the recent activities of the staff and the Committee on Accreditation (COA) to implement the Commission's revised accreditation system. In addition, this agenda item describes the efforts to bring all educator preparation programs under the accreditation system.

Background
The Accreditation Study Work Group (Work Group) began working in June 2004 to review and suggest revisions to the Commission's accreditation system for educator preparation. At the June 2005 Commission meeting, staff presented a study session on the Commission's accreditation system: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2005-05/2005-05-6A.pdf. The study session was a thorough presentation of information related to the Commission's accreditation process at that time. At the October 2005 Commission meeting, the Work Group and the COA presented their recommendations for revisions to the Commission in an agenda item. This agenda item is available on the Commission's website at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2005-10/2005-10-6C.pdf.

On August 1, 2006, the Commission took action to begin accreditation site visits in 2007-2008, endorsed priorities for the scheduling of accreditation site visits, and acted on the first six recommendations of the Work Group and the COA. This agenda item can be found on the Commission's website at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-08/2006-08-6b.pdf. On September 14, 2006, the Commission approved an additional seven recommendations of the Work Group and the COA. This agenda item can be found at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-09/2006-09-5G.pdf.

One of the important policy decisions made by the Commission at that time was that all programs that prepare educators for California's public schools should participate in the Commission's accreditation system. Some credential programs were not included in the accreditation system at that time including: Designated Subjects programs offered by local education agencies, Tier II Guidelines-based Administrative Services programs, Induction programs, and subject matter programs.

At the November-December 2006 Commission meeting (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-11/2006-11-7F.pdf) staff presented an update on the implementation of the Commission's revised accreditation system. In November 2008, the Commission received the Annual Report of the COA that outlines many of the activities of the accreditation system. The report can be found at: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2008-11/2008-11-2C.pdf.   This agenda item provides an update on the work that has been occurring more recently.

Ongoing Work and Implementation Issues

Accreditation Framework
The *Accreditation Framework* is the formal document that details the Commission's policies related to its accreditation system. Staff, along with the COA, completed the language for the *Accreditation Framework* and the document was adopted by the Commission in December 2007 (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-12/2007-12-3B.pdf). The adopted *Framework* is posted on the Commission's web page and is the policy document for the accreditation system.

Accreditation Handbook
The *Accreditation Handbook* is the document that details the procedures that govern the implementation of the Commission's accreditation system. The COA has a draft Accreditation *Handbook* posted on its accreditation web page (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/accred-handbook.html) and is collecting stakeholder feedback on the document. The draft *Handbook* has been used by institutions preparing for accreditation activities. It is expected that the COA will adopt the *Accreditation Handbook* later this spring. The document will continue to be updated as the accreditation system matures.

Implementation of the Accreditation System – Biennial Report Process
Institutions in three cohorts (Orange, Green and Violet) submitted biennial reports in fall 2008. A total of 47 institutions are included in these three cohorts. In a biennial report the program provides aggregated candidate assessment and program effectiveness data, an analysis of the data, and identifies proposed program modifications, if appropriate. Table 1 provides a listing of the types of approved credential programs that submitted biennial reports in fall 2008.

Table 1. Number of Credential Types by Programs Submitting Biennial Reports in the Fall of 2008		
Credential Types	**Program Types**	**Number of Programs**
General Education Teaching Credentials	Multiple Subject	37
	Single Subject	32
	Clear Credential	11
Education Specialists Teaching Credentials	Mild/ Moderate	19
	Moderate/ Severe	15
	Early Childhood Special Education	5
	Resource Specialist	9
	Deaf/ Hard of Hearing	5
Specialist Credentials and Certificates	Reading Certificate	14
	Reading and Language Arts Credential	9
	Agriculture Specialist	2
	California Teachers English Learners (CLAD)	3
	Adapted Physical Education	3
	Early Childhood Specialist	1
Designated	Adult Education	7

Credential Types	Program Types	Number of Programs
Table 1. Number of Credential Types by Programs Submitting Biennial Reports in the Fall of 2008		
Credential Types	**Program Types**	**Number of Programs**
Subjects Teaching Credentials	Career Technical Education	5
	Supervision and Coordination	5
Services Credentials	Preliminary Administration	21
	Professional Administration: Standards-Based	13
	Professional Administration: Guidelines-Based	3
	School Counseling	13
	School Psychology	10
	School Social Work	3
	Child Welfare & Attendance	2
	Language Speech & Hearing	4
	Health (School Nurse)	4
	Special Teaching - Health	3
	Special Class Authorization	2
	Library Media Services	2
Total # of Programs		**262**

Staff reviews all biennial reports and provides feedback to the credential program. Biennial reports are provided to program assessment and site visit reviewers to consider as additional information or evidence in the determination of standard findings. In addition, staff provides technical assistance support to all institutions preparing to submit Biennial Reports in fall 2009.

Staff prepared an agenda item for the COA's April 2009 meeting which summarizes the types of candidate assessment and program effectiveness data submitted by institutions in this first year of implementation. Although it is too early to reach conclusions about the biennial report process, staff is beginning to identify observations from the data and quality of the reports submitted. In addition, staff included a list of preliminary observations for COA discussion. This agenda item is available at http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2009-04/2009-04-item-17.pdf. In the coming months, staff anticipates doing a more thorough review of the data received in this first year of implementation of the biennial report process by credential area and will be able to determine whether some of these preliminary observations are well founded and, more generally, about the role of the biennial reports in the accreditation process.

Anecdotal evidence from conversations with numerous institutions suggest that the establishment of a system for data collection and a process for analyzing the data, as well as determining what program modifications are necessary based upon the data, have provided the impetus for important conversations to occur at the institution and within programs. Institutional personnel have discussed the challenges (timelines, technology required, "buy in" from faculty) of submitting a biennial report as part of the accreditation process. Yet despite these challenges, some institutional personnel have noted that, had it not been for the biennial report process, these

critical conversations may never have occurred nor important program improvements been implemented.

Implementation of the Accreditation System – Program Assessment Process
Program Assessment is the process through which an approved educator preparation program is reviewed against the adopted program standards. In the prior accreditation system, the review of the approved programs was one of the activities completed during the four day site visit. Now, the review of the program begins two years prior to the site visit. Institutions in the Yellow cohort submitted Program Assessment documents in early 2008. The Yellow cohort institutions offer 162 different educator preparation programs. Staff facilitated the program assessment process conducted by members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR). During the review process, reviewers can request additional information from the institution if the response submitted by the program does not adequately address the adopted standards. The institutions can then provide additional information to the BIR readers.

The Program Assessment process informs the selection of the site visit team as well as the focus for the team's work. For site visits in 2009-10, all program assessment documentation, feedback sheets from each phase of the review process, the summary indicating the preliminary findings of the readers as to whether the program meets standards, and a one page narrative summary describing the program will be available to team members.

If a program has not preliminarily met all program standards during the Program Assessment process, then a team member with expertise in that particular credential area will be assigned to the site visit team in order to review the program on-site during the site visit. In cases where all programs are found to have preliminarily met all program standards, then the site visit team will focus on the institution's response to the Common Standards and confirm the preliminary findings of program assessment through interviews and review of additional evidence on site.

Institutions in the Orange cohort submitted Program Assessment documents in early 2009. The review of these documents is just beginning. The results of this review will inform the composition of the site visit teams and determine the focus of the visits which will take place in 2010-2011.

Implementation of the Accreditation System – Site Visits
In 2007-08, accreditation site visits were held at 14 educator preparation institutions. Based on the site visit team's findings, seven institutions received accreditation decisions of *Accreditation* and the other seven institutions had accreditation decisions of *Accreditation with Stipulations.* For six of the institutions, the stipulations required a re-visit be scheduled during the 2008-09 year. Staff provided technical assistance to the institutions which had stipulations included in their accreditation decision. The re-visits for this year have been completed and the reports from the re-visits have been presented to the COA.

In the 2008-09 year, 15 institutions are hosting accreditation site visits. Staff has worked with the institutions, beginning a year before the scheduled site visit, to support the institutions in preparing for the accreditation site visit. Site visits will continue through the middle of May 2009. After each site visit, the accreditation report is presented to the COA at a regularly scheduled meeting. The COA reviews the report and discusses the findings with the site visit team lead and the institution before making its accreditation decision.

For the 2009-10 year, 17 institutions are scheduled to have an accreditation site visit. All institutions have identified the date for their site visit, a Commission consultant has been assigned, and the Year-Out Pre-Visits are being completed this spring.

Standards Revisions
The Commission adopted a plan to review and revise its standards at its November 2007 meeting (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-12/2007-12-3F.pdf). The plan details when each of the standards is to be reviewed and revised. Staff is working to implement the adopted plan.

Common Standards
Revised Common Standards were adopted in June 2007 (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/ commission/agendas/2007-12/2007-12-3F.pdf) by the Commission. The revised standards included an increased focus on candidate assessment and the requirement that all approved institutions have a system to collect and analyze data related to its programs and candidate knowledge and skills.

Subsequently, in April 2008, the Commission directed staff to work with stakeholders to review its adopted Common Standards to ensure that the Common Standards appropriately address: 1) the variety of approved program sponsors including universities, colleges, school districts, county offices of education and other entities; and 2) the full range of educator preparation programs that are approved by the Commission including teaching and service credentials, at both the initial and advanced level, as well as certificate programs. The Commission adopted revised Common Standards at its November 2008 meeting: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2008-11/2008-11-2B.pdf.

Experimental Program Standards
The Commission adopted revised Experimental Program Standards at its March 2008 meeting: http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2008-03/2008-03-3A.pdf. Staff held two technical assistance meetings in Spring 2008 to support program sponsors interested in developing an experimental program. Staff is currently providing technical assistance to three institutions which are in the process of developing experimental programs. The COA will review all prospective experimental programs and monitor the programs during their implementation.

SB 2042 Program Standards
The Commission adopted revised program standards for multiple and single subject teacher preliminary preparation programs at its January 2009 meeting (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission /agendas/2009-01/2009-01-3D.pdf). One major revision is that the SB 2042 program standards no longer have required elements. In addition, the revised standards clarify specific language relating to both Blended and intern delivery models. The adoption of the revised standards took place after almost two years of work with stakeholders, the COA, and the Accreditation Study Work Group. All preparation programs have been notified of the revised standards. For accreditation activities taking place in 2008-09, sponsors have the option to be reviewed against the prior program standards or the recently adopted standards. Beginning with the 2009-10 year, all accreditation activities will use the standards adopted in January 2009.

Additional Recommendations Still to be Implemented
At the August 2006 Commission meeting (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-08/2006-08-6B.pdf), the COA and Work Group recommended and the Commission adopted the following policy statement:

Establish consistency in the accreditation system by including all Credential and Certificate Programs in the Accreditation Process
The Commission adopted the general principle that all programs that lead to a credential or certificate in California should be reviewed on a periodic basis and that the review process should be implemented in a manner that recognizes program differences but maintains comparable rigor across program types.

The types of credential programs that were not part of the accreditation system in 2006 included:
- Subject Matter Programs
- Certificate Programs (i.e., CLAD, BCLAD, Early Childhood)
- Designated Subjects Programs-sponsored by a Local Education Agency (LEA)
- Clear Credential Programs (Induction and Fifth Year)
- Tier II Guidelines-based Administrative Services Programs

In fall 2006, the certificate programs, Designated Subjects programs sponsored by local education agencies, Fifth Year of Study programs, and Tier II Guidelines-based Administrative Services programs were moved into the Commission's accreditation system. Institutions not already a part of the Commission's accreditation system were contacted by staff, invited to one of the technical assistance meetings, and placed into one of the seven accreditation cohorts. The technical assistance meetings introduced the sponsors to the Commission's accreditation system describing in detail the accreditation activities and the specific timeline for the cohorts' activities. These four types of programs have been participating in the Commission's accreditation system since July 2007.

At this time, only Induction programs and subject matter programs are not yet integrated into the accreditation system. Beginning in August 2008, the COA had discussions on the best way to integrate induction programs into the accreditation system. Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction programs have a long history of participating in evaluation and improvement activities on an annual basis. All approved BTSA Induction programs submit an Annual Improvement Plan after participating in either a Peer Program Review or a peer review process called an Induction Program Review. At its January 2009 meeting (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2009-01/2009-01-item-09.pdf), the COA took action to transition Induction programs in the Commission's accreditation system as of July 1, 2009. This action furthered the implementation of the Commission's earlier policy decision to move all programs leading to a credential or certificate into the accreditation system.

Based on the Commission policy that all programs leading to a credential or a certificate should participate in the Commission's accreditation system, the COA will begin discussing how to include approved subject matter programs in the accreditation system. Approved subject matter programs do not lead directly to an authorization to teach K-12 students, but completion of an approved subject matter program satisfies an individual's subject matter requirement. At this time it is not clear how approved subject matter programs will participate in the accreditation system.

Initial Institutional Approval

Pursuant to California Education Code, the Commission has the authority to determine the eligibility of institutions to offer educator preparation programs. This authority also applies to other program sponsors such as school districts, who were made eligible to sponsor professional educator preparation programs through subsequent legislation. The language of the statute is as follows:

> **Education Code Section § 44372** – The powers and duties of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation system shall include the following:
> **(c)** Rule on the eligibility of an applicant for accreditation when the applying institution has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44227.

Agenda items are brought before the Commission, like item 3D at this meeting, when an institution or other sponsor that has not previously been declared eligible to offer credential preparation programs elects to submit a program proposal for approval. The institution prepares a complete program proposal that responds to all preconditions, Common Standards, and the appropriate program standards. The materials are reviewed for compliance with the appropriate preconditions (regional accreditation [or governing board approval], identification of position responsible for oversight, non-discrimination procedures, completion of a needs assessment, involvement of practitioners in the design of the program, agreement to provide information to the Commission, etc.). Once compliance has been established, the application is brought before the Commission for *initial institutional approval*. The institution's prospective program(s) must complete the review process and the individual program(s) must go before the COA for approval.

Local education agencies have been eligible to offer teacher preparation for Designated Subjects teaching credentials for a number of years. Since the LEA based Designated Subjects programs were not in the Commission's accreditation system, the sponsoring school districts and county offices of education were not brought before the Commission for approval as institutions to offer educator preparation programs in California.

At the time that the Designated Subjects programs offered by local education agencies were moved into the Commission's accreditation system, the sponsors did not come before the Commission for initial institutional approval. Some of the sponsors had already been approved by the Commission as institutions eligible to offer educator preparation programs and had been providing one or more educator preparation programs, but other sponsors had not (Appendix A).

Staff plans to bring an information item to the June 2009 Commission meeting related to local education agencies' offering Designated Subjects teacher preparation programs. That item would be followed by an action item at the August 2009 Commission meeting.

Appendix A

Designated Subjects Local Education Agency Sponsors

Institution	Date Approved by the Commission	Cohort
Alameda County Office of Education		Red
Butte County Office of Education-Northeastern California Regional Consortium		Orange
Contra Costa County Office of Education		Red
Fresno County Office of Education		Green
Imperial County Office of Education		Violet
Kern County Office of Education		Violet
Los Angeles County Office of Education	April 2006	Green
Mendocino County Office of Education		Yellow
Sacramento County Office of Education		Indigo
San Diego County Office of Education	June 2005	Green
San Joaquin County Office of Education	July 2001	Indigo
Santa Clara County Office of Education-Metropolitan Education District		Red
Ventura County Office of Education		Indigo
San Diego Unified School District	July 2001	Green
Santa Clara Unified School District		Red
Salinas Adult School		Violet